



FEMA REGION V

RECOVERY UPDATE

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RESILIENCY AS THE FRAMEWORK FOR RECOVERY

Disasters are extraordinary and unpredictable events. Once the drama of the response and the initial efforts to save lives, stabilize the incident and provide primary critical services have faded from the news, the long road to recovery begins. A common observation is that some communities seem to be impacted harder, and take longer to recover than others. National Center for Disaster Preparedness (NCDP) researchers are intensely interested in what makes a community resilient in the face of a disaster: why are some individuals, households, and places quicker to recover than others. They have conducted research to establish a better knowledge base that will guide government, foundations, and others as they work to build—or rebuild—resilient communities.

Community resilience is generally defined as the ability to adapt to, withstand, or rapidly recover from a disaster or catastrophic event. Research and experience suggest that communities with a greater capacity to access their human, social, political and economic capital (resources), and a greater capability in developing, acquiring or exchanging these resources, the more resilient they stand to be in the face of a disaster.



Although a community's true resilience will only be evident after a disaster strikes, much can be done to prepare a community in advance. Among the actions that may make a difference are the identification and training of community leaders; the development of recovery networks; and the

engagement of leaders and their networks to promote individual, family and organizational preparedness. These activities can all show tangible results in communities to effect a more effective recovery from disaster.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact the Region V Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator, Earl Zuelke, at 312-408-5372 or Earl.Zuelke@fema.dhs.gov.

**Excerpts from the National Center for Disaster Preparedness website, <http://ncdp.columbia.edu/research/recovery-resiliency/>*

LONG-TERM RECOVERY PLANNING: GOALS AND POLICIES

The American Planning Association recently released the update to its 1998, “Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction” with the new “Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: Next Generation.”

With so many new laws, legislation, programs and initiatives FEMA partnered with the APA to shape this document, to impart a better understanding of both the extent of the vulnerabilities that communities face as well as the magnitude of those events that are possible. The significance of mitigation actions, value of green infrastructure initiatives, and impacts of climate change are all considerations in the development of a comprehensive resiliency strategy.

Two strikingly obvious, but often ignored historic challenges are the need to accept the inherent complexity of post-disaster recovery, and the need for communities to take local ownership of their situation and gain a full understanding of the relationships among federal, state, tribal and local entities.

The fundamental purpose of planning for disaster recovery is to improve the quality and efficiency of the community’s recovery over that of an ad hoc approach. A local recovery plan provides a basis for requesting resources in a coordinated manner as well as a demonstration of capability to maintain local control. It also provides an opportunity for public input. Through planning, a community’s stakeholders can determine their vision for the recovered community, identify obstacles and opportunities they may encounter in reaching that future, and measure their progress in achieving recovery as they defined it.

The following are three overarching goals that inform almost all recovery plans:

Increase the Speed of Recovery – Essential to many businesses reopening, the amount of population loss the community might experience, and the psychological well-being of residents.

Effective Use of Resources – Providing an implementation organization structure as well as a guiding policy framework for focusing and prioritizing resources.

Increased Opportunity for Community Betterment – Emerging from the disaster as a more resilient and sustainable place as a result of whole community recovery programs.

Long-term recovery planning is similar to comprehensive planning in the breadth of topics that must be addressed, such as land use, infrastructure, economic development and sustainment, and housing. Many different aspects of a community may have to be simultaneously restored or redeveloped since each is dependent upon the others. The APA Planning for Post Disaster Recovery document identified six policy areas that closely align with the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) Recovery Support Functions (RSF):

Land-Use and Reconstruction Standards – Addressing land-use and reconstruction standards will almost certainly be the most controversial component of any recovery planning process, and could include timing & quality of reconstruction, re development patterns, treatment of historical structures, sustainable building practices and place making goals.

Infrastructure and Transportation Restoration – While some of these issues are often addressed in response and short-term recovery actions, long-term considerations relevant to larger disasters can include regional interdependencies, opportunities to improve infrastructure/transportation systems, post-disaster changes in service demands or locations.

Housing Recovery – Sheltering and safe temporary housing is commonly one of the first priorities after a disaster, but also one of the most examined aspects of post-disaster recovery planning. Returning citizens to permanent housing is an underpinning for the success of whole community disaster recovery.

Economic Redevelopment – The return of jobs, tourism, and other indicators of economic health are intertwined with housing recovery, infrastructure restoration and health and social services provision. Sustainable and resilient economic recovery planning should focus not only on the rebuilding of damaged structures but also issues like the resumption of business activity, retention of the local workforce, and reestablishment of the tax base to support essential services.

Environmental Restoration – Although often not a high-priority goal after a natural disaster due to more immediate needs, degraded ecosystems can impact the health, economy, quality of life and hazard protection levels of recovering communities. Possible issues include contamination and post-disaster pollution, habitat restoration, and parks and conservation properties.

Health and Social Recovery – A key determinant of successful community recovery is the level of social vulnerability that exists and the extent to which health and social services are effectively provided. Considerations include public health during the recovery, reopening of schools and childcare programs, increased and extended social service provision, and quality of life and healthy, safe communities.



LONG-TERM RECOVERY PLANNING: GOALS AND POLICIES

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Post-Disaster Hazard Mitigation – Including hazard mitigation in recovery projects will in most cases require additional time for planning; communities that have developed recovery plans before a disaster have the advantage of seizing opportunities for hazard mitigation during reconstruction. Communities with local hazard mitigation plans that have examined post-disaster opportunities for mitigation will also reap benefits.

Resiliency is best accommodated by communities being proactive and pre-planning for disaster, and requires the integration of ideas across these functional areas of concern.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact the Region V Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator, Earl Zuelke, at 312-408-5372 or Earl.Zuelke@fema.dhs.gov.

**Excerpts from the American Planning Association, "Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: Next Generation," https://www.planning.org/pas/reports/pdf/PAS_576.pdf*

Integrating Recovery and Mitigation Planning with Local Planning in Rockford, Illinois

Like many Midwestern cities, Rockford, Illinois, is revitalizing after years of industrial decline exacerbated by the nationwide recession. Federal support for economic recovery has produced initiatives that use many of the same approaches and principles found in the National Disaster Recovery Framework. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities formed by HUD, DOT and EPA, and the White House Strong Cities Strong Communities initiative are supporting economic revitalization in our states. FDRC Earl Zuelke and Community Planning and Capacity Building RSF coordinator, Lillian Thompson, recognized the complementary nature of our mandates and have been active participants in the PSC and SC2.

Rockford is an example of how our complementary efforts can support not only economic revitalization but also resilience in the Midwest. Like so many of our cities, Rockford is blessed and cursed by sitting on a river—historically an economic asset as well as a source of destructive floods. Rockford is doing a lot to revitalize its economy and mitigate flooding to improve the quality of life of residents. NDRF, the CPCB RSF and FEMA Mitigation are working with the City to help ensure that its economic and social improvements are resilient in disaster. The work is not only facilitated by our participation in the PSC and SC2 initiatives. It is also grounded in FEMA's partnership with the American Planning Association and our shared efforts to promote and assist integration of mitigation and recovery planning with local comprehensive planning.

Through the partnerships formed to support its economic revitalization, Rockford has convened many of the stakeholders, partners and decision-makers who should be engaged in NDRF style recovery after a disaster. Through its work with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, the Illinois EPA, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and FEMA Region V Mitigation, Rockford is addressing its flood risk. The next step is to bring these efforts together—under sunny skies—so that when disaster strikes, the transition from recovery planning to comprehensive planning is seamless and consistent with the community vision established in its comprehensive plan. The City will also be more resilient when the comprehensive plan has been informed by flood risk analysis and mitigation as part of its process.

FEMA and the APA have produced references to educate planners, decision-makers and emergency managers and support collaboration to make our cities more resilient—see the call-out box below.

Resources for Integrating Recovery and Mitigation with Local Planning

Integrating Hazard Mitigation Into Local Planning (www.fema.gov/multi-hazard-mitigation-planning)

APA Planning Advisory Service Report 560: Hazard Mitigation: Integrating Best Practices into Planning (www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=4267)

APA Planning Advisory Service Report 576: Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: Next Generation (<http://www.planning.org/research/postdisaster/>)

Recovery Pre-Disaster Planning Guidance (Adjudicated Draft available from Earl Zuelke Earl.Zuelke@fema.dhs.gov)

Effective Coordination of Recovery Resources for State, Tribal, Territorial and Local Incidents (<http://www.fema.gov/resources-national-disaster-recovery-framework>)

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact the Recovery Division Planning Coordinator, Lillian Thompson, at 312-408-5268 or Lillian.Thompson@fema.dhs.gov.

Parting Comments From Region V's Recovery Planning Coordinator

In December, I bought an old house in the City of St Louis and decided to retire to take care of it and get closer to family. My two years in FEMA Region V have been rewarding, although I didn't get out to visit the state agencies as much as I would have liked. You'll see more of that from FDRC Earl Zuelke and my replacement in 2015. I'm excited about the new team. Working with Earl has been the best part of living in Chicago (which is indeed a great city).

I came to Chicago from New Orleans, where I had moved in 2008—three years after Hurricane Katrina. At that time, New Orleans was in the midst of a comprehensive/master planning process that had been attempted numerous times in the wake of Katrina without success. I had the opportunity to work on the final version and see it pass City Council.

The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 called for a lot of changes and mandated the creation of the National Disaster Recovery Framework. The NDRF calls for a local and inclusive approach to recovery that is supported by coordinated assistance from federal agencies—I'm pleased to see Region V states implementing their own versions of the NDRF to coordinate state assistance to their communities. My experience with post-disaster comprehensive planning has informed the pre-disaster planning work we've supported with Rockford, Illinois. Our cities are engaged in revitalization initiatives. Recovery—and mitigation—should be part of the process, to ensure their resilience.

I'll miss being part of making our cities more resilient with you and with help from the NDRF.



Best wishes,

Lillian Thompson

Recovery Planning Coordinator |CPCB RSF

National Disaster Recovery Framework

New FEMA Disaster Grant Obligations Process

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will be implementing a program enhancement to record Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds at the project level. This change will add transparency to the drawdown process for both FEMA and the recipient; provide controls to prevent overdrawing of projects; and allow FEMA to provide the recipient with reports on a daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly basis by disaster, by project.

Additionally, this new process will both simplify and improve the accuracy of the required quarterly reporting process, as well as, enhance both FEMA's and the recipient's fiduciary grants management responsibilities. After this change is initiated in the financial management system, grantees will be able to see project by project obligations and disbursements.

A series of ten (10) webinars were held in February 2015 to provide an overview of the system enhancement as well as training on how to use the new interface and draw down project funding. This program enhancement will apply only to the Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs. The change will be effective for disasters occurring after the implementation date and will not be applied retroactively to prior disasters.

When the change is implemented, the recipient will be required to request funding on a project by project basis. Funds already in the recipient's current disaster accounts will remain in a lump sum until they are fully drawn down but new declaration project obligations will begin to display on a project by project basis.

If you have any questions about this new process or would like additional information, please contact the Public Assistance Branch Chief, Amanda Ratliff, at either Amanda.Ratliff@fema.dhs.gov or 312-408-5440.

Region V Recovery Division Tribal Specialist

Strengthening and maintaining relationships with tribal nations is a high priority for FEMA, and in an effort to enhance Region V's capabilities, the Recovery Division is happy to announce a newly created position, the Recovery Tribal Specialist. Julie Pardini has been selected to fill this new position and is looking forward to working together with all of the Region V Divisions, States, and 34 tribes. Julie will be reaching out to each tribe in order to learn what support and information she can provide regarding the Recovery programs, and how best to implement them.

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FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate all hazards.